8/11/77

Dear Judy, Jim and all,

When I receive a letter like Judy's of the 9th I have the greatest reward possible.

Far from embarrassing me you wet my eyes. I appreciate it more than I can say, especially now, with the medical uncertainties.

I had not really stopped to consider this kind of influence on young people. (Your girls are really young ladies. Maybe I'd better say women, they being of a different generation.)

If as I hope what I have done and hope yet to do is of value to the country and its people, especially young people, remember that what you have done has helped in this, as has the kindness of so many other people once total strangers.

Let me tell you a story so you can appreciate how true this is.

Some years ago we had a full-field audit by Internal Revenue. It was close, careful and lasted a long time. The auditor, who worked at the opposite end of the house, where my wife has her office, came into my office one day and asked me about a trip I made toward the end of 1968. It lasted a month. My first stop was Chicago, then San Francisco, then Los Angeles, San Diego, back to L.A., New Orleans, Dallas, back to New Orleans and then home. The auditor's question was why did my records show no more expenditures that the $100 with which I started, in cash, and some of a small fee I received for one of the speeches I made. He also wanted to know why my costs did not include some of the air fare for which I had ticket stubs. Not a single hotel or motel bill. It seems like they would not have questioned about $3,500 in travel expenses plus fare and cabs. But the truth is that each place I was befriended and that some of my fare was paid by others who had asked things of me. In all those places. Included was one of JFK's lady friends with whom I spent four nights. H.L.Hunt and a TV personality.

Mary did not exaggerate the importance of my wife in this work or the amount of work she does. On each of the books she has been the substitute for the type-setter. Her indexes are the best. And so many other things. (Maybe your young women would like to read the dedication of Whitewash, the first book.)

Speaking of them, it is not only that in their personal lives they are at a difficult period, of the development of maturity. The messes made by the generations that preceeded them gave them added difficulties. The Great Depression of my youth was an easier time because our problems were tangible. Going without was much easier than some of the complexities today's young people grope with.

Your letter means much to me. I just had to stop and thank you for it. And it is the best kind of medicine, too.

I've been feeling better for about a week and a half. This means less worried and walking more and better. I've seen a good specialist and the local doctor inspires confidence. Just before your letter came I returned from the local laboratory where they took blood for a series of tests. It will be a week before they are completed. There is a new question, do I have angina, too. I'm hoping these minor manifestations are of anxiety rather than angina.

By the way, if you see a story in the local papers that can have any interest I'd appreciate a copy.

With love to you all,